

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 AID-20 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-02

TRSE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12 CIEP-02 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01

SCEM-02 INT-08 NEA-10 DRC-01 /219 W

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P R 011345Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2283

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS PRIORITY

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION OECD PARIS PRIORITY

UNCLAS THE HAGUE 4806

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, ENRG, EC, NL, XF

SUBJECT: DUTCH PARLIAMENT DEBATES ARAB OIL BOYCOTT

1. SUMMARY. SECOND CHAMBER DEBATED GOVERNMENT ME
POLICY AND ARAB OIL BOYCOTT OCT 31. PARTY SPOKESMEN
ASKED GOVERNMENT (A) HOW EC WOULD HELP NETHERLANDS
DURING OIL CRISIS AND (B) WHAT OECD COULD TO TO FACILI-
TATE EQUITABLE OIL DISTRIBUTION. OPPOSITION WAS
CRITICAL OF GON'S DIPLOMATIC STANCE VIS-A-VIS ARABS,
SUGGESTING IT HAD LED TO BOYCOTT. PRIME MINISTER DEN
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ULY REJECTED ALL CRITICISM OF GOVERNMENT'S ME POLICY

DECLARING IT HAD NOT CHANGED AND WAS BASED ON RESOLUTION 242. BOTH PM AND FONMIN CHARGED NETHERLANDS HAD BEEN SINGLED OUT FOR BOYCOTT PRIMARILY TO PRESSURE EUROPE. PM AND FONMIN ASSURED CHAMBER THAT GOVERNMENT LOOKED TO EC PARTNERS FOR ASSISTANCE IN AMELIORATING EFFECTS OF BOYCOTT WHICH GON FEARS MAY LAST SOME TIME. BOTH GOVT AND PARLIAMENT AGREED OIL BOYCOTT WAS CRITICAL TEST FOR EC. END SUMMARY.

2. SECOND CHAMBER DEBATED ARAB OIL BOYCOTT AND GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSED REMEDIAL ACTION (PRIMARILY PROHIBITION ON USE OF PRIVATE CARS ON SUNDAY) OCT 31. LIBERAL OPPOSITION SPIKESMAN LED OFF DEBATE ARGUING GON HAD NOT DONE ENOUGH DIPLOMATICALLY TO FORESTALL CURRENT CRISIS AND HAD UNDERESTIMATED ITS DISLOCATING EFFECT. HE WAS INTERRUPTED ALMOST IMMEDIATELY BY LABOR PARTY FOREIGN AFFAIRS EXPERT WHO RECALLED OPPOSITION LEADER WIEGEL'S STATEMENT OF OCT 9 (THE HAGUE 4536) THAT ENTIRE LIBERAL PARLIAMENTARY GROUP STOOD SOLIDLY BEHIND ISRAEL DURING CURRENT CRISIS. SUBSEQUENT SPEAKERS (MOST OF WHOM REPRESENTED PARTIES WHICH HAD MADE STRONG PRO-ISRAEL STATEMENTS AT OUTSET ME HOSTILITIES) FOCUSED ON GENERAL QUESTIONS OF WHAT EC AND OECD WOULD DO IN CURRENT CRISIS. MOST SPEAKERS STRESSED THAT EC RESPONSE TO ARAB OIL BOYCOTT WAS CRUCIAL TEST OF EC.

3. REPLYING TO PARLIAMENTARIANS, PM DEN UYL REHEARSE DUTCH POSITION. HE SAID THERE NO NEED FOR GON TO PRESENT CHAMBER WITH NEW ME POLICY STATEMENT SINCE THERE NO RPT NO CHANGE IN GON POLICY AND THERE NO NEED TO ALTER IT. PM TOOK LINE FONMIN HAD TAKEN IN PRESS CONFERENCE OCT 30 (THE HAGUE 4778) THAT ARABS HAD SINGLED OUT NETHERLANDS TO EXERT PRESSURE ON ALL OF EUROPE.

4. FONMIN VAN DER STOEL SUGGESTED ARAB BOYCOTT WAS PART OF STRATEGY ARRIVED AT WELL BEFORE OUTBREAK OF ME HOSTILITIES. SUCH STRATEGY WAS POSSIBLE BECAUSE ARAB UNITY IN 1973 GREATER THAN IN 1967. VAN DER STOEL THUS COUNTERED CHARGES THAT ARABS HAD EMBARKED ON UNCLASSIFIED

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BOYCOTT AS A RESULT OF GON'S FAILURE TO PLAY ITS DIPLOMATIC HAND CORRECTLY. ALLUDING TO SPECIAL MISSION OF DUTCH AMBASSADOR TO TEHRAN TO OIL PRODUCING STATES, VAN DER STOEL SAID THERE NO RESULTS SO FAR. AS INDICATION OF DUTCH EVEN-HANDEDNESS IN ME, FONMIN NOTED HE HAD INVITED EGYPTIAN FONMIN TO VISIT THE HAGUE IN LATE AUGUST. VAN DER STOEL ADMITTED ARABS WERE GENERALLY CONVINCED THE NETHERLANDS WAS ANTI-ARAB. FONMIN CONFIRMED

NATIONAL PRO-ISRAEL BIAS BUT SAID DUTCH DIPLOMATS CONSTANTLY WORKED TO CONVINCE ARABS THIS DID NOT IMPLY ACTIVE HOSTILITY TO ARABS. HE DISMISSED CHARGES OF DUTCH MERCENARY SUPPORT, ETC. FOR ISRAEL OUT OF HAND. FONMIN SAID EC PARTNERS WOULD BE ENLISTED IN EFFORT TO SET ARABS STRAIGHT ON DUTCH POSITION.

5. MINISTER OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS LUBBERS AND STATE SECRETARY (TRANSPORTATION) VAN HULTEN DISCUSSED PROHIBITION ON USE OF PRIVATELY OWNED VEHICLES SUNDAY, NOV 4 (THE HAGUE 4782). LUBBERS LIKE PM REFUSED SPECULATED ON EFFECT OIL BOYCOTT WOULD HAVE ON DUTCH ECONOMY, BUDGET, ETC. UNTIL MORE DATA AVAILABLE. ADDRESSING QUESTION OF EC ASSISTANCE, ECONOMIC MINISTER SUGGESTED GON MIGHT BE ABLE TO WORK OUT ARRANGEMENT WHEREBY GON TRANSFERS NATURAL GAS IN RETURN FOR OIL. LUBBERS REJECTED DEMANDS FOR IMMEDIATE REOPENING OF LIMBURG COAL MINES BUT AGREED PRESENT SITUATION UNDERSCORED NEED FOR COMPREHENSIVE ENERGY POLICY. ON OECD ASSISTANCE, LUBBERS SAID GON WOULD HAVE TO WAIT RESULTS OF OECD OIL COMMITTEE SESSION LATER IN MONTH. HE SAID GON WISHED THIS GROUP TO MEET EARLIER BUT OTHER MEMBERS DISAGREED.

6. COMMENT: GOVERNMENT EFFECTIVELY COUNTERED CHARGES THAT IT HAD BROUGHT ON OIL BOYCOTT BY INEPT DIPLOMATIC PERFORMANCE. PM AND FONMIN, IN AFFIRMING FUNDAMENTAL CORRECTNESS OF DUTCH ME POLICY, SEEMED TO SUGGEST THOSE DEMANDING CHANGES IN ME POLICY HAD SUCCUMBED TO ARAB BLACKMAIL AND WERE ACTING ON BASIS PURELY SELFISH INTERESTS. OPPOSITION LEADERSHIP WHICH UNDOUBTEDLY HOPED CAPITALIZE ON CURRENT CRISIS, WAS IN EXTREMELY WEAK POSITION IN VIEW WIEGEL'S STRONG SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL DURING BUDGET DEBATE. TOWARD END OF DAY, DEBATE UNCLASSIFIED

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DEGENERATED INTO TIRESOME QUIBBLE OVER WHAT GROUPS ELIGIBLE FOR EXEMPTION FROM SUNDAY DRIVING PROHIBITION. MOOD OF CHAMBER WAS RELATIVELY SUBDUED WITH PARLIAMENTARIANS AWARE OF SERIOUSNESS OF SITUATION IN WHICH NETHERLANDS FINDS ITSELF BUT WITHOUT IDEAS ON HOW TO RECTIFY IT. MOST SPEAKERS SUPPORTED OFFICIAL GON POSITION THAT THE BOYCOTT IS DIRECTED PRIMARILY AGAINST EUROPE AND NOT ONLY THE NETHERLANDS. EVIDENT IN MOST STATEMENTS WAS STRONG EXPECTATION THAT IT IS UP TO HOLLAND'S "EUROPEAN PARTNERS" TO ASSIST THE GON IN AN HOUR OF NEED. THUS, ARABS' OIL BOYCOTT OF NETHERLANDS IS TEST NOT ONLY OF "OIL WEAPON", BUT PERHAPS MORE IMPORTANTLY ALSO OF EC'S COHESION AND EFFECTIVENESS IN TIME OF ADVERSITY. GOULD

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